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PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS: REGIONAL ISSUES

- In recent years, the City of Surprise and a number of the Sun City communities introduced, operated, and subsequently disbanded community-specific public transit programs. These programs were founded on the principle of increasing efficiency via utilization of volunteer or uncompensated drivers. Though the program did increase efficiency in terms of lower operating costs through volunteer drivers, capital, fuel, administrative, and maintenance expenses were heavily subsidized by Valley Metro. Ultimately this model was deemed financially unsustainable.
- The implementation of near-, mid-, and long-term recommendations require consideration of regional concerns. Of particular import with any recommendation involving the delivery of transportation services is the procurement of vehicles capable of delivering the desired level of service. The City of Surprise possesses seven vehicles funded through grants from the City of Phoenix. These vehicles are currently in storage. Initial service recommendations should consider these available vehicles, so as to reduce the startup costs for any service.
- Operation of the services could potentially include contracting the service to a qualified third-party contractor. This may facilitate delivery of service and increase efficiency by maximizing economies of scale. The use of a contracted service provider would also reduce the likelihood of perceived inequalities in level of service provision.
- Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) should be considered when developing implementation plans and service models. Establishment of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) could aid in the development of PPPs. Partnerships between local cities (such as Surprise and Peoria) and the Sun City HOA organizations may lead to mutually beneficial scenarios wherein lower operating costs may be realized. These potential savings may arise from a number of factors, and the potential availability of reduced-salary drivers through the citizens of private communities. PPPs may be particularly effective in the Sun City Festival community through the implementation of a vanpool or similar program with established service parameters (such as shuttle service with planned trips to retail or medical centers).
- Another tool implemented in similar communities and districts is a taxi voucher program. Such programs typically include concise parameters for service delivery and acceptable use, though allow for enhanced flexibility in providing service to customers (particularly with respect to service span and hours of operation) without the additional overhead costs of traditional public transit programs. These types of programs may also be expanded to include private ambulance services which are capable of catering to non-ambulatory patrons and as such expand the ADA complementary services already in effect.